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MEMORANDUM

April 17, 1959

TO : G - Mr. Murphy
FROM : EUR - Foy D. Kohler
SUBJECT : France and NATO

Thurston has suggested that you take advantage of Joxe's presence here to raise with him some of our apprehensions regarding France's present and possible future attitude towards NATO (Paris' 3800 attached). Although I am not optimistic that a conversation with Joxe will have much of an effect on the French position, I believe that it would, nevertheless, be a useful exercise if only to put the record straight. I do not, however, believe you should try to do this today but rather await further discussions within the tripartite group to see if those discussions provide us with a better understanding of what the French seek. It might then be best to raise these matters bilaterally with the French shortly before Joxe's departure.

In a discussion with Joxe you might wish to use as a talking off point the rather cryptic reply made by de Gaulle to a question in his recent press conference:

Questions: Given your viewpoint on the question of cooperation and integration within NATO, can you say whether you envisage doing the same thing regarding the presence in the Mediterranean of units of the ground forces or of the air arm?

Answers: Well, you will see what happens. With regard to the fleet, I have just explained to you what the situation is and the reasons for it. Should other changes occur, you would certainly be informed.

You could then make the following points:

1. We continue to be concerned about the withdrawal of the French Mediterranean fleet. The other NATO countries share our views in this matter. We understand that the NATO military authorities are currently considering the military implications of this matter and that they will report to the North Atlantic Council. We also understand that French and NATO military authorities are studying arrangements concerning France's Mediterranean fleet. We will reserve our further comments on this problem until we have seen the results of these studies.

2. If there

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2. If there were further withdrawals of French forces from NATO assignment, we believe these would have a very adverse affect within NATO itself.

3. The French position on other NATO matters, such as integrated air defense, is also a matter of concern to us and the other NATO countries.

4. We have a problem within the United States. Both State and Defense have been pressed hard in various Congressional hearings for explanations of France's attitude towards NATO. This is important as the 1960 budget is under study by Congress and has in it a very large sum for France, chiefly for advanced weapons (\$137 million). These weapons would be, of course, for use by NATO units. In addition, we have equipment (\$50 million) under our fiscal 1959 program which we are about to offer to France and there are large amounts in the pipeline (\$150 million).

5. General Norstad raised the question of USAF squadrons in France with Prime Minister Debre on March 17. He told him that these units need storage rights for nuclear weapons. Without these rights these squadrons are ineffective. We had thought this question was being settled but it seems to have bogged down. In light of Berlin we would hope prompt action could be taken so as to permit the continued stationing in France of the units.

Attachment:

Paris telegram 3800.

Concurrences:

WE - Mr. McBride

RA - Mr. Timmons

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